

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONROV 02746 131656Z
ACTION AF-10

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TAGS: PINT, LI
SUBJECT: MATTHEWS SPEAKS ON PLANS FOR THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF
LIBERIA (PAL)

REF: MONROVIA 1818

1. IN A SPEECH APRIL 8 AT THE UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA BEFORE
A STUDENT GROUP REPORTEDLY NUMBERING 2,000,
GABRIEL B. MATTHEWS, PRESIDENT OF THE
PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF LIBERIA (PAL, INDICATED
THAT PAL MIGHT NOT SEEK REGISTRATION OF THE PROGRESSIVE
PROPLES PARTY UNTIL IT HAD ASSEMBLED "A LARGE, WELL
TRAINED AND DISCIPLINED ORGANIZATION." MATTHEWS
EXPLAINED THAT IF PAL ATTEMPTED REGISTRATION WITH THE
LEGAL MINIMUM OF 300 MEMBERS, IT WOULD BE EASIER FOR
THE GOL TO FIND AN EXCUSE TO INVALIDATE THE REGISTRATION.
EXCERPTS OF THE SPEECH FOLLOW:

"HAVING EXHAUSTED THE OPTION OF MAKING RECOMMENDA-
TIONS, WE ARE NOW EXPERIMENTING WITH THE FORMATION OF
A POLITICAL PARTY... IF OUR EXPERIMENT IN THE
FORMATION OF A PARTY FAILS, WE WILL AGAIN CHANGE OUR
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PAGE 02 MONROV 02746 131656Z

METHOD...

"TO BEGIN, LET ME INFORM YOU, IN THE INSTANCE THAT
YOU DON'T ALREADY KNOW, THAT LIBERIA IS, FIRST AND
FOREMOST, A CLASS SOCIETY. THERE EXISTS SOCIAL
STRATIFICATION BASED ON WEALTH... WHILE MOST OF THE
NATIONS OF THE WORLD ARE SEEKING WIDER PARTICIPATION OF

THEIR PEOPLE IN THE DETERMINATION OF THEIR DESTINY,
LIBERIA REMAINS A RIGIDLY EXCLUSIVE SOCIETY CONTROLLED
AND OPERATED BY A PROPRIETARY CLASS...

"ALL OF THOSE SO-CALLED POLITICAL PARTIES OF THE
PAST WERE MADE UP OF, BY, AND FOR THE PRINCES OF
PRIVILEGE AND THE OTHER PARASITES WHICH SURVIVE ON THE
SWEAT OF THE TOILING MASSES... HAVING THE SAME CLASS
INTERESTS, THE MEMBERS OF THESE SO-CALLED OPPOSITION
PARTIES GENERALLY PROPOSED PROGRAMS SIMILAR TO THOSE
OF THE TRUE WHIG PARTY... AFTER THE STRAIN IMPOSED
ON THE TRUE WHIG PARTY BY THE OPPOSITION PARTIES OF
1955, THE PARTY APPARENTLY EMBARKED ON A CRUSADE
AGAINST THE RISE OF ANY OTHER PARTY... BE NOT
SURPRISED THAT SOME OF THE FLUNKIES IN THE TRUE WHIG
PARTY HAVE ALREADY BEGUN A VICIOUS CAMPAIGN OF
CHARACTER ASSASSINATION AND LIBELLIOUS (SIC) REMARKS
AGAINST THE LEADERSHIP OF THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE
OF LIBERIA...

"THE PEOPLE WHO ARE INTERESTED, AND THE PEOPLE WHO
SHOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN
OPPOSITION PARTY IN LIBERIA ARE THE WORKERS, PEASANTS
AND STUDENTS. LOOK AT PAL'S MEMBERSHIP: IT IS THE
WORKERS, THE PEASANTS, AND THE STUDENTS WHO ARE ALIGNING
FOR THE PROGRESSIVE PEOPLES PARTY...
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PAGE 03 MONROV 02746 131656Z

"TODAY, THE TRUE WHIG PARTY HAS A MONOPOLY ON THE
INSTRUMENTS OF VIOLENCE, AND I SUSPECT THAT THAT PARTY
WILL NOT WILLINGLY RESPECT THE LAW AND PERMIT THE
EXISTENCE OF AN OPPOSITION PARTY OF POOR PEOPLE. WHY?
BECAUSE POOR PEOPLE AND RICH PEOPLE HAVE ANTAGONISTIC
AND INCOMPATIBLE INTERESTS. THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD-
WIDE STRUGGLE FOR HUMAN FREEDOM SHOWS THAT NO RULING
CLASS EVER SURRENDERS POWER WILLINGLY...

"THE PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE OF LIBERIA HAS ONLY
DECLARED ITS INTENTION TO REGISTER AS A PARTY AND
ALREADY THE MEMBERS OF THE TRUE WHIG PARTY ARE TREMBLING
FOR FEAR OF LOSING THEIR MONEY BAGS... YET A
POLITICAL PARTY IS POSSIBLE HERE IN OPPOSITION TO THE
TWP. THE TRUE WHIG PARTY WILL NOT WILLINGLY CONSENT,
BUT THE TWP CAN BE COMPELLED TO AGREE... I COULD,
THIS VERY EVENING, HAVE DOCUMENTS PREPARED LISTING
THE NAMES OF WHAT WE UNDERSTAND SHOULD BE THREE
HUNDRED ELIGIBLE VOTERS, AND WE COULD CARRY THEM
WHEREVER WE BELIEVE THEY OUGHT TO GO FOR REGISTRATION
AS A POLITICAL PARTY ON MONDAY MORNING. TEN MINUTES

LATER, THE OFFICIAL WHO RECEIVES THE PAPERS, HE WOULD CERTAINLY BE A MEMBER OF THE TRUE WHIG PARTY, WILL TELL US OF SOME TECHNICALITY WHICH RENDERES THE DOCUMENTS IMPROPER....

"NOW, WE CAN TRY TO ORGANIZE THE PARTY ANOTHER WAY. IF WE WENT WITH A LIST OF TEN THOUSAND PEOPLE AND THE GOVERNMENT REALIZES THAT THEY ARE, FOR EXAMPLE, ALL OF THE CLERKS IN THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES OR ALL DOCTORS IN THE HOSPITALS, AND THEY ALL REFUSED TO GO TO WORK UNTIL THE DOCUMENTS ARE APPROVED FOR OUR PARTY, THE TRUE WHIG PARTY WILL MAKE A POLITICAL DECISION, AND WE MIGHT HAVE AN OPPOSITION PARTY.

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PAGE 04 MONROV 02746 131656Z

"WHAT IS NECESSARY HERE IS A LARGE, WELL TRAINED AND DISCIPLINED ORGANIZATION WHICH WILL NOT TAKE NO FOR AN ANSWER... THE TRUE WHIG PARTY WILL ACCEPT AN OPPOSITION PARTY IF IT REALIZES THAT IT WILL COST IT MORE TO SAY NO THAN TO SAY YES."

2. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE BY MATTHEWS SINCE HIS RETURN TO LIBERIA FEBRUARY 26. HIS HEAVY EMPHASIS ON THE ALLEGED CLASS BASIS OF LIBERIAN SOCIETY AND ITS CONTROL BY THE "PROPERTIED CLASS" AT THE EXPENSE OF THE "TOILING MASSES" WILL APPEAL ONLY TO A RADICAL MINORITY AMONG STUDENTS. THIS TYPE OF LANGUAGE, AS NOTED IN THE REFTEL, WILL ENSURE THE FIRM REACTION FROM THE ESTABLISHMENT PREDICTED BY MATTHEWS, AND LIMIT THE APPEAL OF HIS MOVEMENT. MODERATES WHO MIGHT LIKE TO SEE MORE ACTIVE COMPETITION IN THE LIBERIAN POLITICAL SCENE WILL STEER CLEAR OF PAL, MATTHEWS AND THE PROGRESSIVE PEOPLES PARTY.
CARTER

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